



AINAVISTI*. WITH A DESIRE TO BE HEARD

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The value of any idea is zero when it is still in the start-up phase. Once resources and people become involved in the idea, it gains a form in which it can be sold. At the beginning, Ainavisti was just a random thought in my mind. But the group has now become a reality and a forum in which several people can express themselves. These are people who believed in my idea from the very start, when the potential results were not yet evident.

*Ainavisti – landscape painters in Latvian

It is commonly believed that the most difficult time for any project is its beginning. I have a different view of things. I believe that all phases of a project are equally difficult and equally easy – everything depends on one's point of view and reactions. Often the only element of our lives that we can control are our reactions to events. And that's why we should allow things to happen and flow exactly as they are meant to do. By adhering to this philosophy, I discovered an organic and harmonious way of developing my group's sound, image and identity.

From the commercial aspect, it might seem that we have chosen a musical genre that is very complicated to sell. The foundations of Ainavisti's music can be found in jazz, a genre that occupies a very small niche in Latvia's already modestly sized music market. But we soon expanded our range of influences to adjacent genres and styles. By getting to know musicians from other musical contexts, we have introduced colours from the worlds of classical, ethnic and other styles of Western rhythmic music (which includes progressive rock, fusion and world music elements). In order to blur the boundaries even more, we recently also began involving "rhythm tap" in our concerts. One of my main mottos is "Do not limit your music in terms of style or genre! Make music authentically and honestly, and let the listener define it."

When asked what kind of music I play, I always respond, "We play good music, music that we'd be happy listening to ourselves." That's also one of the main things that motivates me. I want to create a message that I would be interested in hearing myself; I want to give listeners the opportunity to experience something out of the ordinary, at the same time letting them connect the dots, or, in other words, link the emotions they feel through the music with their own lives and experiences.

I was motivated to found the group Ainavisti by my need to create a platform in which both I and other musicians could fulfil ourselves, communicate with each other and search for the unknown. Although in the beginning I was the main leader/composer (this is evident on our debut album, titled "-"), the other musicians are now gradually coming forward with their own compositions and ideas, too, so that we can realise them together. We stand by our motto: "It's not our names or numbers that are important, but the idea that we represent." This means that Ainavisti can be a duet, a nonet with two step dancers, or a whole orchestra. The main thing is the music and its message, which will always be in harmony with Ainavisti's original impulse, namely, to create unique landscapes of sound from various sources of inspiration (paintings, nature, the city, people) and let listeners experience them through visually stimulating music.

And now a little about our album. I know that the title confuses people, so I'll explain. On the cover you see us, Ainavisti. The

AINAVISTI –



dash after our name has a twofold meaning. It represents the Japanese kanji character for “one”, or “first”. But it can also be interpreted as a dash (which in Latvian is called a “thought sign”), encouraging listeners to come up with their own titles for the album. The album itself is like a piece of historical evidence, a record of what Ainavisti was like in 2015 and 2016. The music consists of my own original compositions inspired by paintings (Dali’s Clocks, Starry Night, Parquet Polishers), emotional landscapes (Full Moon Chronicles, A Dream Returning, Aadya, When the Common Path Takes Apart) and real places (Home, Walking) as well as a short suite about travelling (Wanderer I and Wanderer II). The music was created in a relatively short time, so it tells a very personal story about my own development as a composer, as a pianist and also as the leader of an ensemble.

I once heard a saying about music that really struck a chord with me: “Talking about music is like dancing about architecture.” It’s hard to succinctly and precisely describe what you hear on our album or at our concerts, but I’m convinced that what we create is very unique and even necessary for the music market in Latvia and the world. I don’t want to limit us only to the context of jazz, because I believe that wouldn’t really be fair either to jazz or to us. But I guess jazz is nevertheless the closest source. I feel that nowadays people are becoming more open and responsive towards the new and unusual. At first, people were often unnerved by or fearful of modern jazz, which was a style that did not originate here but was instead brought over from America and Scandinavia. But now that we’ve more or less integrated our national identity and let those ideas pass through our prism, listeners are ready to listen and delve deeper.

Right now, having stabilised the make-up of Ainavisti, I’m looking ahead to a bright future. I feel like each musician – and each dancer, too – is ready to say something and wants to be heard. By supporting each other we feel strong and full of energy, ambitious and reckless. At the same time, however, we are also level-headed and compassionate, ready to give ourselves completely to music and the listeners.